

They eventually began their journey up the Missouri River and into the newly acquired Louisiana Territory on May 14, 1804. For the next two and a half years, the expedition traveled the length of the Missouri River, crossed the Rocky and Bitterroot Mountains, and followed the Clearwater, Snake, and Columbia Rivers to the Pacific Ocean and back again.

Along the way, Expedition members kept detailed journals of their activities, collected specimens of discoveries, and charted their progress. They proceeded up against the Missouri's current, rarely making more than 12 miles per day, to the Mandan Villages where they spent the winter of 1804-1805. The next spring they continued on, joined by French trapper Charbonneau and his young Shoshone wife Sacagawea. With her assistance they crossed the mountains and proceeded down the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean. After spending the winter of 1805-1806 on the coast, they retraced their route, eventually returning to St. Louis in late September of 1806.

Courtesy of the Corps of Engineers - Kansas City District; "Lewis & Clark Bicentennial: Lower Missouri River".

## The Journals

The following excerpts are taken from "The Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition"; Vol 3; Gary M. Moulton, editor; University of Nebraska Press

### Up the Missouri...



September 3rd, Monday, 1804 (Clark)

"...this Creek is Small & comes in between 2 white banks, Great quantities of Plumbs of a most delicious flavor, I have collected the Seed of 3 Kinds which I intend to Send to my brother, also Som grapes of a Superior quallity large & well flavoured ...."



September 4th, Tuesday, 1804 (Clark)

"...Came to at the mouth of Qui courre (rapid) this river comes roleing its Sands which (is corse) into the Missouris from the SW by W. this river is 152 yards across the water and not exceeding 4 feet Deep it does not rise high when it Does it Spreads over a large Surface, and is not navigable..."

Clark refers to the Niobrara River as "Qui Courre" which, roughly translated, means 'the river that rushes' in French. The Omaha name for the Niobrara was 'niubthatha,' or wide river.

